

Living Word Bible Church

The Christian Life Study Guide

Study 1

Name: _____

Memory Verse: John 3:5.

"Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

Before we begin looking at the Christian Life let us remind ourselves how it begins. It begins when we receive new life from God. This new life is:

i. **Spiritual.** 'New life' does not mean that we are given new bodies. It means being given a new nature. It means to be born again by the Spirit of God (**John 3:6**).

ii **From God.** It is God who gives us this spiritual 'new life'. To be born again is to be born "*from above*", that is, from God. We do not inherit it from our parents; we do not earn it by our good living and we cannot buy it with money. It is God's gift. (**Read John 1:12-13**).

iii **Everlasting.** This means it will never come to an end, and it will never be taken away from us (**John 10:28**).

Here are a few phrases that are often used to describe a Christian, someone who has new life from God.

A CHRISTIAN IS A CHILD OF GOD.

Read 1 John 3:1-2. We are not children of God by our natural birth. God is the Creator of all men and women, but that is not the same as being the Father of all. In **John 8:42-44** the Lord Jesus says that God is the Father of some people, but that other people do not have God as their Father. There are two 'families' of people in the world—there is the 'family' of Adam (and the devil), and the 'family' of God. Every baby born into this world is born into the family of 'Adam.' As the first man he is the head of the devil's family. You remember how he rebelled against God, and took sides with God's greatest enemy- Satan (or the devil). As members of this vast family, we all have human bodies, but we also have sinful, fallen natures. Every baby born into this world joins this vast 'family'; the

baby has a human body, but also a sinful fallen nature. The ONLY exception to this is Jesus, who was born of the Virgin Mary through the power of the Holy Spirit (**Luke 1:35**). We all get this sinful nature from Adam, who is the father of us all. When we become Christians we are taken out of Adam's family and born into God's family and given the right to be called children of God, as **John 1:12** teaches us.

A CHRISTIAN IS A SAVED SINNER.

"... Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Timothy 1:15).

Christians are people who have been saved by God, from the punishment that their sins deserved. The punishment of sin is to live forever away from God; this 'everlasting separation' from God is called in the Bible 'Hell'.

Sin is disobedience to God. We disobey God, when we do the things He tells us NOT to, like stealing, lying and murder. We also disobey God when we fail to do the things which He wants us to do, like being respectful and obedient to our parents, and putting God first in everything. Although God is a God of love, He is also a holy God and He cannot allow sin to be unpunished. He is angry about our sin and will judge it, one day. Because He loves us, He warns us about ***"the wrath to come"*** and is willing to save us from His judgment if we trust in the Lord Jesus and in His death for us, upon the cross.

A CHRISTIAN IS A FORGIVEN SINNER.

Read 1 John 2:12. When we are born again, God forgives all our sins because ***"Christ died for our sins" (1 Corinthians 15:3)***. This means that when Jesus died on the cross, He bore our sins and suffered the punishment that was deserved for us. This makes it possible for God to forgive all our sins and to wipe them away. King David wrote of the wonderful joy of knowing that his sins had been forgiven. ***"Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered" (Psalm 32:1).***

Thank God, if you know these things are true of you! If they are not, ask God today to make you one of His children, to save you from His punishment of sin, and forgive you all that you have done against Him. Remember the Lord Jesus said, ***"He who believeth in Me hath everlasting life" (John 6:47).***

Worksheet

1 Explain as clearly as you can what it means to be "Born Again".

2 Give a reason why:-

a. Not everyone is a member of God's family.

b. Jesus was different to us when He was here on earth.

c. We all have a sinful nature.

3 a. Give four examples of how we may sin against God by doing what He has told us not to do. (Need help? read Exodus 20).

1.

2.

3.

4.

b. Give two examples of how we may fail to do what God has told us to do. (Need help? read Ephesians 6).

1.

2.

4 'A Christian is a saved sinner.'

a. From what has he/she been saved?

b. What do you think is the greatest proof that God wants to save us?

5 Write a sentence describing the kind of man Nicodemus was. Base your answer on the verses you have read in John 3.

6 The first word of Psalm 32, "blessed" could be translated "oh the happiness". Why should a forgiven person be happy?

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Study 2

Name: _____

Memory Verse: 1 Peter 2:2.

"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby."

In the first Study we looked at some phrases which told us about Christians. Here are some more descriptions of what a Christian is:

A CHRISTIAN IS SOMEONE WHO HAS BEEN CONVERTED TO GOD.

Acts 3: 19. When people are converted it means that they change or turn about, or turn from one thing or opinion to another. They have turned their backs on the sinful things that they used to do and are now living lives that please God. In **Acts 26:18** becoming a Christian is said to be like turning from "**darkness to light**". In **Acts 14:15** it includes turning from pagan sacrifices to the one true God. For some people, the change in their lives when they are converted is a major thing; for others it is not.

The Christians in the city of Thessalonica are a good example of what conversion is. We read of them that they "**turned to God from idols.**" (**1 Thessalonians 1:9-10**). They were converted to God!

A CHRISTIAN IS SOMEONE WHO HAS BEEN RECONCILED TO GOD.

Colossians 1:21. Before we become Christians, we are God's enemies. All men and women are born as enemies to God. It is the sinful nature we inherited from Adam that makes us God's enemies, because the sinful nature hates God, hates the Bible, and longs to do the things that are against God. That doesn't necessarily mean we hated Him with all our hearts, but it does mean that we didn't love Him, keep His Word and try to please Him. But when we become Christians, God takes away our enmity and gives us "**peace with God**" (**Romans 5:1**). It is through the death of the Lord Jesus Christ that we are reconciled to God, "**who hath reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ . . .**" (**2 Corinthians 5:18**).

A CHRISTIAN IS SOMEONE WHO IS "IN CHRIST".

Before we become Christians we are "**without**

Christ" (**Ephesians 2:12**). This means that we were in the family of Adam, our first ancestor, who sinned. We were, like him, sinners. But when we are "**born again**", we are brought into the family of Christ, who is the Head of our new family. And "**in Christ**" we receive all the blessings that God gives. Paul says, "**God . . . hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings . . . in Christ**" (**Ephesians 1:3**).

A CHRISTIAN IS SOMEONE WHO HAS THE HOLY SPIRIT LIVING WITHIN HIM.

1 Corinthians 6:19. Before we become Christians, our lives are controlled by our sinful natures. But when we become Christians, the Holy Spirit comes to live within us (**1 John 3:24**).

Having the Holy Spirit means we have a new nature which begins to show itself in a dislike of sin, a love for God and His Word. The Holy Spirit also helps us to overcome temptation. He is always with every true Christian, and He will never leave us. (**Read John 14:16 -17**).

A CHRISTIAN IS SOMEONE WHO IS ALIVE TO GOD.

Ephesians 2:1. Before we become Christians we are 'dead' to God. That means we did not know Him, love Him, understand Him, or have any fellowship with Him. But when we become Christians, the Holy Spirit makes us alive to God. So then, a Christian is a born-again sinner, having a new spiritual life. He is saved from God's judgment on sin, has had all his sins forgiven, has been converted to God from the old sinful ways, has been reconciled to God and is no longer God's enemy. He is "**in Christ**", in a new family, has the Holy Spirit living within him and is alive to God. We should thank God that all these things happen to us the moment we become Christians, even though we don't know it at the time. If you have truly repented of your sins, and trusted in the Lord Jesus as your personal Saviour, then all these things are true of you! You are "**a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new**" (**2 Corinthians 5:17**).

Read through this sheet again if you do not know how to answer any of the questions on the worksheet.

Worksheet

1 A. What word is used to show that a person has truly turned to God?

B. Read 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10. What change took place in their lives.

C. Read Acts 19:17-19. How did they show that they had repented?

2 A. What does it mean to be reconciled to God?

B. Why do we need to be reconciled to God?

C. What makes it possible to be reconciled to God?

3 ANSWER TRUE OR FALSE :-

The Holy Spirit lives within every Christian.

The Holy Spirit will leave us if we do not live as good Christians.

The Holy Spirit comes to dwell in us at our baptism.

1 Corinthians 6:19 teaches us that our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is the One whom Jesus promised to send to His disciples. (See John 14:16-17).

4 Read Ephesians 2:1-10.

In what way were we once "dead"?

In what way is God "rich"?

By what can we not be saved?

What is the purpose of our salvation?

5 Read the memory verse until you know it off by heart, then write it here.

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Study 3

Name: _____

Memory Verse: 2 Corinthians 5:17

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

Read Luke 19:1-10.

The Bible tells us that Christians are new creatures. **"Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."** We are told to walk in **"newness of life"** (See Romans 6:4). What does that mean? In the Bible Reading we read about a man called Zacchaeus. He was a tax-collector who lived at the same time as Jesus. As a tax-collector, it was his job to collect people's taxes and give them to the Romans. Like the majority of tax-collectors, he was probably a cheat who treated people very unfairly. But Jesus came to see him one day, and having spoken to Zacchaeus, He said, **"Today salvation has come to this house"** (Luke 19:9). How could He tell? The Lord Jesus knew the change that had taken place in Zacchaeus. He can see into our hearts in a way no one else can! But, in addition there were visible signs of change:-

ZACCHAEUS HAD A CHANGE OF HEART

Whereas before he had been selfish, money-grabbing and mean, he now became generous and thoughtful. He promised to give away half of his goods to the poor. It was the same with Saul, later known as Paul. When he became a Christian, he stopped persecuting Christians and began to care for them.

ZACCHAEUS WANTED TO PUT RIGHT WHAT HE HAD DONE WRONG

Where he had cheated people before, he now wanted to repay them, and to give them four times the amount, much more than Jewish law demanded. Everyone who becomes a Christian, should really try to put things right, if it is at all possible.

ZACCHAEUS PROBABLY STOPPED CHEATING PEOPLE.

He put right what was wrong, which showed he intended to stop being dishonest. This is what leading to a change of behaviour. The Bible says to Christians, **"Let him who stole steal no more"** (Ephesians 4:28). There were some

nasty characters living in Corinth when Paul came and preached the Gospel to them. They were saved, and this meant that they had to change their way of life. In his letter to them, Paul mentions idol worshippers, thieves, drunkards, and those guilty of immorality, then adds, **"Such were some of you. But you are washed . . ."** (1 Corinthians 6:11). Some of the people in the church in Ephesus had practised magic before they became Christians.

Once they were saved, though, they put an end to that publicly. **"Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them in the sight of all men"** (Acts 19:19). This showed a complete change of mind and behaviour - a clear sign of true conversion! It maybe that few who become Christians these days are saved from such dreadful backgrounds. But many people do have sinful habits which are not right in God's sight. If we did certain things before we became Christians, such as lying, cheating, stealing, and using bad language, we should see a change in our behaviour after we are saved. We should also experience extra power - God's power - to help us overcome the bad habits and sins. **"Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God"** (Romans 6:12-14). Whereas before it was a struggle to say 'No' to sin, Christians have the help of the Holy Spirit to resist temptation. In addition to a great change in our life as far as the old ways and habits are concerned, we should also have a new love for God, for His Word (the Bible), and for other Christians. Remember the two parts to the MEMORY VERSE above. 1 - **"old things are passed away"** (sin and evil habits), 2 - **"all things are become new"** (a new love for God, new power, new habits). Are you able to point to such a change in your life? That is a good sign that you are saved. Thank God for it.

Read through this sheet again if you do not know how to answer any of the questions on the worksheet.

Worksheet

1. A. IN WHAT PARTICULAR WAYS WERE MANY OF THE TAX-COLLECTORS DISHONEST?

B. IN WHAT WAYS DID ZACCHAEUS' CHANGE OF HEART EXPRESS ITSELF, WHEN HE BECAME A FOLLOWER OF JESUS?

2. A. WHY SHOULD A THIEF NO LONGER STEAL AFTER HE BECOMES A CHRISTIAN? (EPHESIANS 4:28).

B. WHAT EXTRA 'POWER' DOES A CHRISTIAN HAVE TO ENABLE HIM TO OVERCOME BAD HABITS AND SINS?

3. WHAT DO YOU THINK PAUL MEANT WHEN HE WROTE, "BUT YOU WERE WASHED . . ." TO PEOPLE AT CORINTH WHO HAD LIVED VERY WICKED LIVES? (SEE 1 CORINTHIANS 6:9-11).

4. A) WRITE A SENTENCE TO EXPLAIN WHY PEOPLE IN EPHESUS BURNED THEIR BOOKS (SEE ACTS 19:17-19).

B) CAN YOU THINK OF A PRESENT-DAY COUNTERPART * TO THIS BOOK-BURNING?

5. EXPLAIN WHAT THE STUDY MEANS WHEN IT SPEAKS ABOUT 'THE TWO PARTS OF THE MEMORY VERSE.

6. WHAT EVIDENCE OF 'NEW LIFE' MIGHT BE SEEN TODAY, IN A TEENAGER WHO HAS RECENTLY BEEN SAVED?

* COUNTERPART = Something similar to or resembles.

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Study 4

Name: _____

Memory Verse: 2 Timothy 3:15

"And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

Read Acts 16:11-15.

Suppose some young people, who have been brought up in Christian homes and who have never lived openly wicked lives, become believers in the Lord Jesus. What evidence will there be that they have been truly saved? They have never used bad language, been expelled from school, been violent or addicted to alcohol or other drugs!. We cannot expect to see a dramatic change in their behaviour now that they are saved! This absence of a complete 'about - turn' in conduct sometimes causes young folk to wonder if they are truly saved. Lydia about whom we have read in the Bible Reading, possibly was like this - she had never been 'a bad character', and indeed, she was saved while attending a prayer-meeting! There are, however, other tests we can apply to ourselves to see whether we are Christians or not. When we become Christians, God gives us all new life, and new desires, regardless of whether we were really sinful or not. We say 'really sinful', carefully, for in God's eyes there is no real difference! The fact is that we are all sinners as Romans 3:23 tells us. This second set of tests, which we should apply to ourselves, are tests to help us see what we are now, not just tests which look for a major change in our lives.

A CHRISTIAN BEGINS TO LOVE GOD.

1 John 4:19. Before we became Christians we didn't love God. Perhaps we were a little afraid of Him, and we didn't know Him. But when we trust the Lord Jesus, God helps us to love Him and to want to do the things that please Him. This love for God helps us to be careful that we don't grieve Him by doing the things that He does not like. In other words, we begin to live for God, not for ourselves. See 2 Corinthians 5:15.

A CHRISTIAN BEGINS TO LOVE OTHER CHRISTIANS.

Perhaps, before we became Christians, we thought Christians were a little weird. But when God changes

our lives, He changes our friends too. We begin to like other Christians, and we begin to enjoy their company. Loving other Christians is one of the signs that we are born again. 1 John 3:14 states that **"We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."**

A CHRISTIAN BEGINS TO LOVE THE BIBLE.

We begin to enjoy reading it. We might not grasp all that it says, because it is still a hard book to understand. But we begin to appreciate it more; we begin to understand what it has to say, and we want to read it and study it. In the same way as a newborn baby wants to feed as soon as it is born, and needs milk to grow, so a new Christian longs for the **"milk of the Word"** which is the Bible (1 Peter 2:1-3).

A CHRISTIAN BEGINS TO WANT OTHERS TO BECOME CHRISTIANS TOO.

We start to invite our friends and family and to pray for them to be saved. We try to follow the example of Paul who said, **"Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved"** (Romans 10:1).

A CHRISTIAN IS SOMEONE WHO IS TRYING TO BE HOLY, TO PLEASE GOD.

1 John 3: 2-3. A non-Christian, someone who is not born again, is not interested in pleasing God. He is someone who lives for himself. But when we are saved, God puts into our hearts a love for God and for pleasing God. As we read the Bible, we find out the things which do not please God. We then try not to do these things, and God helps us to avoid them through His Holy Spirit. We will also find out the things which do please Him, and we will try to do them. Now, this does not for a moment mean we will never sin again, once we have become Christians. But it does mean that we will be gradually becoming more like the Lord Jesus as each day goes by. These are some of the signs of the 'new birth'. You will notice that they are all POSITIVE things. Sometimes we are inclined to think of the Christian life in NEGATIVE terms- What we do not do, or say. It is much better to look for positive signs of spiritual life! Be challenged today! Put yourself to the test!

Read through this sheet again if you do not know how to answer any of the questions on the worksheet.

Worksheet

1 A. WRITE OUT ROMANS 3:23 _____

B. EXPLAIN IN YOUR OWN WORDS WHAT THIS VERSE MEANS. _____

2 LOOK UP 1 JOHN 4: 19 AND ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.

A. WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE GREATEST PROOF THAT "HE FIRST LOVED US"? _____

B. HOW CAN A CHRISTIAN SHOW THAT HE OR SHE LOVES GOD? _____

3 WRITE OUT JOHN 13:34 TO DISCOVER THAT THE LORD JESUS COMMANDS CHRISTIANS TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER. _____

4 SUGGEST SOME PRACTICAL WAYS IN WHICH NEW CHRISTIANS COULD SHOW TRUE 'CHRISTIAN LOVE' TO OTHER CHRISTIANS. _____

5 FILL IN THE MISSING VERSE NUMBERS:

"We love him, because he first loved us"

1 John 4:

"We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren"

1 John 3:

"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby"

1 Peter 2:

6 READ 1 PETER 2: 1-3, THEN ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS:-

A. What should the attitude of the Christian be towards the Bible? _____

B. Suggest some reasons why some Christians may give up reading the Bible. _____

C. If we neglect reading our Bibles, what effect will it have on our spiritual growth? _____

7 READ 2 TIMOTHY 3:15-16 AND ANSWER THE FOLLOWING:-

i Who inspired the Holy Scriptures?

ii How much of the Bible is work of man?

iii In what way can the Scriptures make a person 'wise'?

iv Write 4 things the Scriptures are profitable for.

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The Christian Life Study Guide

Study 5

Name: _____

Memory Verse: John 14:15

"If ye love me, keep my commandments."

Read John 13:12-17.

Yes! Jesus is Lord. That is what Jesus should be to us, now that we are Christians. He should be our Lord and Master, which basically means that we are to obey Him, by putting into practice what the Bible says and honouring Jesus as our Lord, not just as our Saviour.

As Christians, we are to be:

1. BELIEVERS

This is perhaps obvious, because we became Christians by believing on the Lord Jesus. (**Acts 16:31**) But the first step of faith is to be followed by many others! Believing the Word of God, and putting it into practice was so important for the first Christians that they became known as 'believers'. Paul wrote to his young friend Timothy and encouraged him to "**be thou an example of the believers . . .**" (**1 Timothy 4:12**).

2. FOLLOWERS

This means 'imitators', or 'copiers.' In other words, believers are to imitate (or copy) God, in order to become more like Him. Paul wrote to the church at Ephesus, "**Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children.**" (**Ephesians 5:1**). They are also to copy other believers. Paul also reminded the Christians in Thessalonica that "**And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost**" (**1 Thessalonians 1:6**).

3. DISCIPLES

The word 'disciple' means 'a learner'. In New Testament times a teacher had a band of followers who learned the things he taught and did, and then put them into practice. Disciples didn't just follow the teacher literally, by walking behind him! A disciple was one who followed the teacher by putting into practice the things the teacher taught. The idea was that the teacher taught disciples, who then went out and taught others to be disciples. As a disciple you listen to, look at, learn from, and live like your Master!

Jesus had many disciples, and from them He chose twelve to be His special companions. These twelve spent all their time with Jesus. They were chosen for two purposes:

(1) that they might be with Him and (2) that He might send them out to preach (**Mark 3:14**).

The 'being with Him' was the learning part - the 'sending forth' was the practising part. They were to go and preach His message. Later, just before the Lord Jesus went back into Heaven, He commanded His disciples to "**Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you**" (**Matthew 28:19-20**).

4. SERVANTS

As servants, we are to obey our Master. Before we become believers we are the servants of sin and Satan. But the Lord Jesus makes us free, not to do our own thing and live whichever way we want to. We are freed in order to become the servants of the Lord Jesus. "**What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's**" (**1 Corinthians 6:19-20**). One of the things Jesus said to people was, "**why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?**" (**Luke 6:46**). He once called Himself the "**Lord and Master**" of believers. (**John 13:14**) The Lord Jesus was the Perfect Servant of His Father in Heaven and did the things that pleased His Father. He Himself set us an example. We are to be His servants and servants of God. The servant is not greater than the master. We are expected to obey Him. "**If ye love Me, keep My commandments**" said the Lord Jesus (**John 14:15**).

As servants, we are answerable to the Lord for what we do. As servants, we must serve God faithfully and selflessly, hoping one day to hear Him say, when we reach Heaven, "**Well done, good and faithful servant . . . Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord**" (**Matthew 25:23**). The Apostle Paul summed up a true believer's relationship to God when, in speaking of Him, he said, "**whose I am, and whom I serve**" (**Acts 27:23**). He recognised that, now that he was saved, he belonged to God, body and soul, and he wanted to serve and obey Him. He was 'saved to serve.' So are you!

Worksheet

1 WHY ARE CHRISTIANS REFERRED TO IN THE BIBLE AS “BELIEVERS”?

2 A) ACCORDING TO ACTS 11:25-26, IN WHAT CITY WERE BELIEVERS FIRST CALLED CHRISTIANS?

B. WHAT DOES THE WORD ‘CHRISTIAN’ IMPLY?

3 EXPLAIN THE MEANING OF THE WORD ‘FOLLOWER’ AND SUGGEST ONE WAY IN WHICH A CHRISTIAN MAY FULFIL THIS DESCRIPTION.

4 A) FOR WHAT TWO PURPOSES DID THE LORD JESUS CHOSE HIS TWELVE DISCIPLES?

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B) Name four of the twelve disciples (MARK 3:16-19).

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5 A DISCIPLE IS ‘A LEARNER’.

i. Explain clearly how he learns.

ii. When he has learned, what is he then expected to do?

iii. How can this be applied to Christians living today?

6 READ 1 CORINTHIANS 6:19 -20, THEN ANSWER:-

i. What did Paul mean when he wrote to the Christians at Corinth, “***Ye are not your own***”?

ii. How can young Christians today “**GLORIFY GOD**” in their bodies?

7 EXPLAIN IN YOUR OWN WORDS WHAT IT MEANS TO MAKE JESUS, THE LORD OF YOUR LIFE.

Read through this sheet again if you do not know how to answer any of the questions on the worksheet.

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The Christian Life Study Guide

Study 6

Name: _____

Memory Verse: Matthew 28:19

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

Read Acts 2:36-47

In Acts 2:41 we read that over 3,000 people became Christians on the same day. A number of things happened at that time which are important to us because they show what the first Christians did.

1. THEY "GLADLY RECEIVED HIS WORD."

This means that they listened to the message Peter preached, agreed with it, and acted on it. In other words, they believed what he said about Jesus was true. They also did what Peter told them to do. They changed their minds about Jesus, believing now that He was "**Lord and Christ**". They accepted the message, repented of their sin of rejecting Jesus' claims to be the Christ, and were saved.

2. THEY WERE BAPTISED.

Baptism was an important step for these people. It continues to be an important act of obedience for believers all over the world. We must look carefully at what it means to be baptised.

WHO WERE BAPTISED? "Those that gladly received his word." (Acts 2:41)

It was believers who were baptised. The first step of obedience to the Gospel is repentance. The second step is belief or trust in the Lord Jesus. In the Bible, believing in Him is very closely linked with being baptised. It is always stressed that believers are baptised, not unbelievers. It is also clear that a person becomes a believer before baptism, not after baptism or because of it. It is our faith in the work of Christ that makes us Christians, not our baptism. Baptism is the 'fruit' of faith in Christ, not the 'root' of it.

HOW WERE THEY BAPTISED?

The word 'baptise' in the Greek language in which the New Testament was originally written, means 'to immerse' or 'to put something completely under'. If you have a white handkerchief and you want to turn it blue, you buy a dye powder from the shop, put it in

water, mix the colour around, and then plunge the same way, then, as you would 'baptise' a piece of cloth by immersing it in water, so these early Christians were immersed in water after they became believers. The same thing happened to the Ethiopian man in the desert. (**Acts 8:36-38**) He listened to the message Philip preached to him, believed it and then was baptised. When they came to water in the desert, both he and Philip "**went down both into the water**" and he was baptised in it.

WHY WERE THEY BAPTISED?

They were baptised in water because the Lord Jesus had said to His disciples just before He left them and went back to Heaven, "**Go . . . make disciples . . . baptising them**". (**Matthew 28:19**) Now Peter was obeying this command of the Lord Jesus in telling these new believers at Jerusalem that they needed to be baptised. Their baptism was an act of obedience. All Christians should likewise be obedient!

WHAT IS THE SPIRITUAL MEANING OF BAPTISM?

When an individual believer goes down into the water, under the water, and comes out of the water, he is showing symbolically what he has believed. Paul wrote, in **1 Corinthians 15:3-4**, "**Christ died for our sins . . . He was buried . . . and He rose again the third day . . .**". When a Christian is baptised, he is declaring his faith in the death burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus as the basis of his salvation.

3. THEY BEGAN TO LEARN.

Having been saved and baptised, they began to learn the teachings of Jesus. The ones who taught them were the apostles, the men who had been with Jesus, and had heard Him teach. The new Christians "**continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine**." (**Acts 2:42**) In other words, they went along to the teaching meetings of that first church and learned what the Christian faith is all about. If you have been saved, that's good. You are now a Christian. You have obeyed the Gospel. That is the first step. The second step is to be baptised. Enquire about this matter from a nearby Church who practice believer's baptism in the way that the New Testament teaches, and, if possible, go along to their teaching and preaching meetings. Learn, obey, and later you will be able to teach others!

Worksheet

1 A) WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO REPENT?

B) WHY WAS IT NECESSARY FOR THE JEWS, IN JERUSALEM, TO REPENT?

C) WHY IS IT NECESSARY FOR US TO REPENT?

2 A) WHAT DOES THE WORD 'BAPTISM' MEAN?

B) DESCRIBE BRIEFLY THE BAPTISM OF THE ETHIOPIAN.

3 ANSWER EACH OF THESE QUESTIONS IN A FEW WORDS.

i Who should be baptised?

ii How should they be baptised?

iii Why should they be baptised?

iv What is baptism a 'picture' of?

4 AS A CHRISTIAN WE NEED TO LEARN AND OBEY. SUGGEST WAYS BY WHICH A YOUNG CHRISTIAN CAN DEVELOP SPIRITUALLY

5 BAPTISM IS A PUBLIC EXPRESSION OF SOMEONE'S PERSONAL, PRIVATE FAITH. EXPLAIN THIS STATEMENT FROM WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED FROM THIS STUDY.

6 WHAT DO YOU THINK IT MEANS TO "CONTINUE STEADFASTLY IN THE APOSTLE'S DOCTRINE"?

Read through this sheet again if you do not know how to answer any of the questions on the worksheet.

Living Word Bible Church

The Christian Life Study Guide

Study 7

Name: _____

Memory Verse: Hebrews 10:24-25

"And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."

Read Acts 2:41-47, Acts 20:6-12

The Bible Reading from Acts 2 shows us two other things that these first believers did.

THEY WERE 'IN FELLOWSHIP' WITH EACH OTHER.

This means more than that they spent a lot of time with each other. Now that they were believers they found they had a lot in common. They loved God, they loved each other and they loved to spend time with each other. These new Christians shared their food, their homes, their money and their knowledge of God. But the words 'in fellowship' mean something else, too. They were, to put it simply, all members of the same group of believers, i.e. *"The Church"* :47. Nowadays, if a building is used for religious purposes it is often called a 'church'. For instance, if we want to direct someone somewhere we would perhaps say, "Go down the road and turn left at the church". But the real meaning of the word 'church' in the Greek language in which the book of the Acts was written, was 'the assembly', or 'group'. The 'church' then, is the people, not the building! So these new believers all joined the same assembly, or church, of Christians. They were in fellowship with one another. As a new believer, you, too, should try to find an assembly of Christians, who recognises Jesus Christ as Head, and follows closely the teaching of the New Testament for all their beliefs. You should try to attend their times of worship, prayer, and teaching, whenever possible.

THEY CONTINUED IN THE BREAKING OF BREAD AND IN PRAYERS.

These were two of the meetings that the believers had in the early days. They met together to *"break bread"* (Acts 20:7) and to pray. Now we know that this *"breaking of bread"* was different from just eating together, because Acts 2:42-47 explains that, in

addition to the *"breaking of bread"*, they were *"breaking bread from house to house"*. The *"breaking of bread"* is also known as *"The Lord's Supper"* (see 1 Corinthians 11:20). It was the time when believers met together and broke the bread and drank the cup (of wine) in memory of the Lord Jesus. They did this because He had said to His disciples before He died, *"Do this in remembrance of Me"* (see Luke 22:19 and 1 Corinthians 11:23-26).

They also met together for prayer. Praying is talking to God. God talks to us when we read the Bible. We talk to Him when we pray. It is good to pray on your own, and to tell God what is in your heart in a private way. But it is also good to get together with other Christians and to pray. Some of the first prayer meetings are recorded in Acts 4:23-31 and Acts 12:12-16.

From the example of these first century believers, we see that God wants us to be baptised, and then to join ourselves to a company of Christians. Then, when we are in fellowship with them, we should be at the 'breaking of bread', teaching, and prayer meetings. If we do this, we will grow and we will help others to grow, and we will please God. In Acts 20, which was the Bible Reading for this Study, we see Christians, many years later, still following the example of these first Christians in Acts 2. Paul came to visit them, and found that they had come together on Sunday, *"to break bread"*, and to listen to the teaching of the Word of God.

Being a Christian means we are part of a family. It is important that we should have the support and friendship of other Christians. The obedience and practices of these first believers are a good example for us today. But living the Christian life means more than just attending meetings. That is the public side of Christian life. Privately, it is walking with God, too, as we shall see.

Read through this sheet again if you do not know how to answer any of the questions on the worksheet.

Worksheet

1 A) WHAT DO MOST PEOPLE MEAN WHEN THEY TALK ABOUT A 'CHURCH' TODAY?

B) WHAT IS THE NEW TESTAMENT MEANING OF THE WORD 'CHURCH'?

2 EXPLAIN WHAT 'FELLOWSHIP' MEANT TO THE FIRST CHRISTIANS? _____

3 A) IN WHAT PRACTICAL WAYS DID THEY SHOW THEIR LOVE FOR EACH OTHER?

B) WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE BENEFITS TODAY OF HAVING CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP AND CHRISTIAN FRIENDS?

4 THE "BREAKING OF BREAD" WAS INTRODUCED BY THE LORD JESUS HIMSELF. READ 1 CORINTHIANS 11:23-26, AND ANSWER THE FOLLOWING BRIEFLY:

i. When did He introduce it? _____

ii. What did He say the bread would represent? _____

iii. What did He say about the cup? _____

iv. Why do Christians take the bread and the cup? _____

v. For how long are they to continue doing this? _____

5 ANSWER TRUE OR FALSE:-

In the New Testament people were baptised by sprinkling water on their heads.

☐

All believers in the Lord Jesus should be baptised.

☐

It is God's will that Christians should meet together.

☐

In the Bible, the word 'church' always means a building for religious services.

☐

Praying to God was a feature of first century church-life.

☐

6 SUGGEST SOME REASONS WHY WE SHOULD NOT FORSAKE "THE ASSEMBLING OF OURSELVES TOGETHER". _____

7 LOOK AT ONE OF THE PRAYER MEETINGS IN ACTS 4:23-31:-

i. Who were "their own company" or "companions"? _____

ii. What phrase in :24 indicates they were united in their prayers? _____

iii. What was the three-fold result of this prayer meeting? _____

Living Word Bible Church

The Christian Life Study Guide

Study 8

Name: _____

Memory Verse: Acts 1:8

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

Read John 4:16-30

Christians, then, are disciples, or followers, of the Lord Jesus. From the example of the early Christians in Acts 2 we have seen that we are to be baptised, in obedience to the Lord's command, that we are to join a local church of Christians, participate in their 'breaking of bread', listen to the teaching of the Bible and join in prayer. But before returning to Heaven, the Lord Jesus gave us another command! He said, **"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature"** (Mark 16:15).

A CONVINCED WOMAN

In John 4 the Lord met a woman from a city of Samaria, called Sychar. He spoke to her, and she believed what He had to say. She was so impressed by Him, that she went into the city and told other people about Jesus, saying, **"Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?"**. In fact, she didn't just tell them about Jesus, she invited them to come and hear Him (:29). As a result of her testimony and her invitation to people to come, **"Then they went out of the city, and came unto him"** (:30) Later we read "Many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman" (:39).

A HEALED MAN

In Mark 5 we read of a wild demon-possessed man who was healed by the Lord Jesus. He wanted to go with Jesus but Jesus said to him, "Go home to your friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you". As a result of what he had to say, **"all men did marvel"** (See Mark 5:18-20).

PERSECUTED PEOPLE

Acts 8 records how the Christians in Jerusalem were persecuted for their faith and many of them left Jerusalem and went to Judea and Samaria (:1).



Even though they had been persecuted for their faith, and had to leave their homes, the Christians **"Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word"** (:4).

These three examples show us that one of the results of new birth and of becoming a disciple is a deep desire to tell others about the Lord Jesus. Romans 10:13 contains this wonderful promise, **"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved"**. But the next verse asks some very pointed questions! **"How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?"** (:14) So God expects us to go and tell others about Him, that they may be saved too. Now we are not all preachers in the sense of standing up and preaching a sermon as Peter did in Acts 2. But the woman of Samaria and the healed man of Mark 5 probably didn't preach a sermon. They just told other people what Jesus had said or done for them. Anyone can do that!

Have you friends, members of your family, or neighbours who have not been saved? You should be looking for opportunities to speak to them about the Lord and the Bible, and perhaps inviting them to come to meetings to hear the Word of God. It may be that people will not listen to us, or will laugh at us. But God has told us to go and tell others and we should obey Him. Wouldn't it be a wonderful thing if others became Christians as a result of your testimony?

Read through this sheet again if you do not know how to answer any of the questions on the worksheet.

Worksheet

- 1 THE WORDS QUOTED FROM MARK 16:15 ARE OFTEN CALLED 'THE GREAT COMMISSION'. EXPRESS BRIEFLY, IN YOUR OWN WORDS WHAT THE LORD JESUS IS TELLING HIS DISCIPLES TO DO.

2 READ JOHN 4:23-30 AGAIN.

i. What convinced the woman, more than anything else, that Jesus was 'the Messiah' ('the Christ')? _____

ii. What effect did her words have on the men of the city? _____

iii. What title did the men of the city use for Jesus? _____

- 3 A) FOR WHOM ARE WE TO BE WITNESSES? _____

B) TO WHOM SHOULD WE POINT ANYONE WHO ENQUIRES ABOUT THE WAY OF SALVATION? _____

C) WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO TELL OTHERS THE 'GOOD NEWS'? _____

D) SUGGEST SOME REASONS WHY WE OFTEN MISS OPPORTUNITIES TO TELL OUR FRIENDS ABOUT THE LORD JESUS. _____

- 4 A) WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE 'PERSECUTED' FOR YOUR FAITH? _____

B) IN WHAT WAYS MIGHT A YOUNG CHRISTIAN BE PERSECUTED AT SCHOOL, WORK OR COLLEGE? _____

C) WHEN WE ARE PERSECUTED, WE SHOULD REMEMBER THE PROMISE WHICH THE LORD JESUS GAVE HIS DISCIPLES IN MATTHEW 28:19-20, WRITE THE PROMISE HERE.

- 5 A) USING THE MEMORY VERSE GIVE THE NAMES OF THE PLACES WHERE THE APOSTLES WERE TO BE WITNESSES FOR THE LORD JESUS. _____

B) WHAT NAME IS USUALLY GIVEN TO CHRISTIANS WHO GO ABROAD TO MAKE THE GOSPEL KNOWN? _____

C WRITE A SENTENCE ABOUT ONE SUCH PERSON WHOM YOU KNOW, OR ABOUT WHOM YOU HAVE HEARD OR READ. _____

Living Word Bible Church

The Christian Life Study Guide

Study 9

Name: _____

Memory Verse: James 5:16

“The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much”.

READ: Matthew 6:5-8, Hebrews 11:6, James 1:5-8.

How do we talk to God? We talk to Him when we pray. Prayer is very important for the Christian. In Acts 2 we saw that Christians in the early days of the church met together to pray. This is a very important part of church life, and we should go to the prayer meeting as often as we can. But the Bible tells us that we should pray on our own, too. Private prayer is also very important. One of the things which showed that Saul of Tarsus was converted to Christ was, when God told Ananias, “He prayeth” (Acts 9:11).

There are a number of important things we should know about personal prayer.

1. IT SHOULD BE PRIVATE

The Lord Jesus said that when you pray to God you should go into a private place and “enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret” (Matthew 6:6) This is not because there is anything embarrassing about praying, but God does not want us to show off to others, and make them think how super-spiritual we are. In public prayer meetings, we unitedly ask God for things we need, but in private prayer we speak to God about our personal affairs.

2. IT SHOULD BE REGULAR

Daniel prayed to God three times a day (Daniel 6:10). We should make it a habit to pray, at least once a day, perhaps after we have had our daily Bible reading. It is a good idea to keep notes of what we prayed for and when, so that we can thank God when He answers our prayers. We should remember to thank Him every day for the many good things with which He blesses us.

3. IT SHOULD BE PERSONAL

When we pray, we should tell God what is on our minds or hearts, what we hope for, or are like Him to do. But we should also pray for ourselves, not just asking for things all the time.

God doesn't want to hear a shopping list from us every time. We should not forget to tell God of our appreciation of Him, and to thank Him for what He has done for us. We can also pray for guidance, for increased understanding of the Bible, for holiness, for help when we are feeling tired or depressed.

4. IT SHOULD BE UNSELFISH

We should pray for ourselves, but not only for ourselves. God expects us to pray for other people too, “for all men, for kings and all that are in authority . . .” (1 Timothy 2:1-2). You can pray for your friends who are not yet Christians, for your family, for the Government and the country, and for any news items that are pressing.

5. IT SHOULD BE HOPEFUL

We should pray believing that God will answer our prayers, rather than expecting Him not to. Praying in faith is very important (James 1:6-7 and Hebrews 11:6).

6. IT SHOULD BE FERVENT (James 5:16)

That means, we should put some effort, some meaning into our prayers. God doesn't want to hear us saying, “Bless mum and dad, and bless my sister, and help my friend, and give me this or that, and help me to have a nice day. Amen”. He wants us to put some heart into our prayers. “Lord, I really long for my friend to know You. Please help her to understand the Good News about the Lord Jesus. Do help me to use the opportunities You give me, to explain these things to her.”

7. IT SHOULD BE FROM HOLY HEARTS.

That doesn't mean we have to be perfect when we pray, but it does mean that if we are wilfully disobeying God, He will not respond to our prayers. “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.” (Psalm 66:18). Confessing our sins is always an important part of our personal prayer life. (1 John 1:9).

Some people say that because God knows everything there is no point in praying; we are only telling Him what He knows already. But prayer is not just telling God things. It is communicating with Him, so that we can have a relationship with Him. He said to His disciples, “Watch and pray.” (Matthew 26:41). That is what you should be doing.

Worksheet

Read through this sheet again if you do not know how to answer any of the questions on the worksheet.

1 A. READ MATTHEW 6: 5-8 AGAIN. HOW DID JESUS SAY "the hypocrites" PRAYED?

B. IN CONTRAST TO "the hypocrites", HOW WERE THE DISCIPLES OF JESUS TO PRAY?

C. WHAT IS SO WONDERFUL ABOUT OUR FATHER IN RELATION TO OUR PRAYERS?

2 'DANIEL WAS A MAN OF PRAYER'

i. How frequently did he pray each day? (See DANIEL 6:10) .

ii. When his life was in danger, he prayed and God answered him. Write out his prayer of thanksgiving. (2:23).

iii. Write a list of things for which YOU could thank God.

3 A. WHAT DO YOU THINK "LET HIM ASK IN FAITH" MEANS? (JAMES 1:6).

B. WHY IS FAITH SO IMPORTANT WHEN WE PRAY?

4 READ 1 TIMOTHY 2:1-2 AGAIN.

a. When we 'talk to God', it may take several forms. List THREE of them.

--	--	--

b. Which words in verse 1 would you connect with these kinds of prayer?

i. Being grateful to God.	ii. Praying for other people.	iii. Asking God to supply definite needs.

5 HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER SOMEONE WHO SAID THAT THERE IS NO POINT IN PRAYING BECAUSE GOD KNOWS EVERYTHING ANYWAY?

6 EXPLAIN AS CLEARLY AS YOU CAN WHAT PSALM 66:18 MEANS.

Living Word Bible Church

The Christian Life Study Guide

Study 10

Name: _____

Memory Verse: Psalm 25:5

"Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day."

READ: Psalm 19:7-14.

When we pray, we speak to God. But how does God speak to us? Are we to expect to hear a voice from Heaven telling us what to do, as people did in the Old Testament? Will God speak to us in dreams, as He used to, in Bible days?

In *1 Samuel 3*, we read how God spoke to Samuel by calling him in an audible voice. Samuel, however, thought it was Eli, the priest, who was calling him (see *:5-8*). In the New Testament, when the Lord Jesus was baptised, God's voice was heard from Heaven saying, "*This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*". (*Matthew 3:17*). Today, however, God does not speak to us in that way! Neither does He normally communicate with us through dreams, as He did in the days of Pharaoh, king of Egypt (*Genesis 41*) or in the case of Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. (*Daniel 2*).

God spoke to men and women in New Testament days through His Son, the Lord Jesus. Jesus told people the things they needed to know about God. Then God, through the Holy Spirit, caused men to remember and write down the words and miracles of Jesus. In this way, people who hadn't seen Him or heard Him could know what He had said. He also revealed other things by the Holy Spirit to the apostles, who wrote them down. These writings were collected together to form a book, or series of books, called the Bible. God speaks to us today when we read the Bible. He speaks to us by helping us understand the meaning of the words He has written. Through His Holy Spirit, the words teach us, rebuke us, correct us, inspire us and guide us (see *2 Timothy 3 :16 -17*).

As the Bible is the main way in which God speaks to us we should be careful to do three things regularly.

1. We should try to READ PART OF THE BIBLE EVERY DAY (*Psalm 1:2*). Some people can manage to read large few verses. Find out what you are most comfortable with, and then set aside the same amount of time each day in which to read the Bible. One of the best ways of doing this is to use daily Bible reading notes, along with your Bible. You should also have a notebook and a pencil to write things that you find interesting, or questions you want to ask someone. Make a habit of reading the Bible every day, and you will find God speaking to you through His Word. If we are too busy to give God time in reading His Word, we shall never know His will for our lives. Mary took time to listen to her Lord's Word (see *Luke 10:38-42*).

2. We should LISTEN TO THE TEACHING OR PREACHING OF GOD'S WORD, in the church to which we belong, as often as possible. While private reading of the Bible is good, it is no replacement for listening to the public preaching of the Bible. This is because God blesses the preaching of His Word in a particular way. You will only get real benefit from the preaching of the Word if you listen to it. When you listen to the preaching you hear God speaking to you. At home, you can give more time to the topic preached about, and allow the Lord to speak, as you quietly think about what you have heard.

3. We should try to BE IN THE COMPANY OF THOSE WHO KNOW THE BIBLE better than we do. Other Christians can point out to us when we are doing wrong things. We need Christian friends who know the Bible, to guide us in our lives.

If we do these three things, we put ourselves in the position where we are reading and hearing God's Word regularly. Then God will use the Bible to speak to us. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to apply the teachings of the Bible to our hearts and consciences. Is God able to speak to us through the Bible? Are we reading it, hearing it, discussing it? We should be!

Read through this sheet again if you do not know how to answer any of the questions on the worksheet.

Worksheet

1 FINISH THESE SENTENCES:-

i. When we pray, we _____

ii. When we read the Bible _____

2 A. IN WHAT WAY DID GOD SPEAK TO THE YOUNG BOY SAMUEL? _____

B. WHAT MISTAKE DID SAMUEL MAKE? _____

C. WHAT DID HE SAY WHEN HE EVENTUALLY ANSWERED THE LORD? (1 SAMUEL 3: 10). _____

3 A. WHAT OTHER METHOD OF COMMUNICATING WITH PEOPLE DID GOD USE IN OLD TESTAMENT TIMES? (CLUE - READ JOB 33:14 -16). _____

B. NAME TWO PERSONS TO WHOM GOD SPOKE IN THIS WAY. _____

4 ANSWER TRUE OR FALSE?

i. Today, God speaks mainly to us through dreams.

ii. The Holy Spirit controlled the minds (and the pens!) of the men who wrote down the words which the Lord Jesus had spoken.

iii. The Bible is the chief way in which God speaks today.

iv. It is impossible for anyone to understand the Bible properly without the help of the Holy Spirit.

v. Reading the Bible once a week is sufficient.

5 IN :7-11 OF THE BIBLE READING THERE ARE SEVERAL NAMES, SUCH AS "the law, "the testimony", "the commandment". THESE WORDS ALL STAND FOR 'THE WORD OF GOD', OR 'THE BIBLE'. FROM THE PSALM, WRITE DOWN THREE EFFECTS WHICH THE BIBLE CAN HAVE ON US - IF WE READ IT! _____

6 "MARY.... SAT AT JESUS' FEET AND HEARD HIS WORD." (LUKE 10: 39) HOW CAN WE FOLLOW HER GOOD EXAMPLE? _____

7 WRITE A SENTENCE TO EXPLAIN HOW WE CAN BENEFIT FROM HEARING THE PREACHING OF GOD'S WORD. _____

Living Word Bible Church

The Christian Life Study Guide

Study 11

Name: _____

Memory Verse: 2 Timothy 2:15

“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

READ: Acts 17:10-12, 2 Timothy 2:15-19.

Now that you have become a believer, it will soon become clear to you that you have a new desire to read the Bible yourself. Reading the Bible on its own is very important. It makes it possible for God to speak to you, as we saw in the previous Study. It is also very important for you to study the Bible. Studying the Bible is more than just reading it. It means coming to the Bible to ask questions and find answers. You should ask such questions as, “What do these words I have just read in the Bible mean?” and “What does the Bible teach about such things as - love, marriage, families, drinking alcohol, war, and the end of the world?” To help you to understand and study the Bible more fully you will probably need a number of good books.

1. You should try to get a one-volume COMMENTARY on the Bible. A commentary is a book that comments on each passage of the Bible and helps us to find the meaning of it. There are several excellent one-volume commentaries on the Bible. One of the best is the BELIEVER'S BIBLE COMMENTARY which was written by William MacDonald.

2. A good CONCORDANCE will also be helpful. A concordance is like a large index of all the important words in the Bible. It will help you to find a verse where it says something which you can't fully remember, but you know one or two words of it. Look up those words in the concordance, and it will list the verses where those words occur. Then you should look down the list until you come to the one you are trying to find. A good concordance for new believers is CRUDEN'S CONCORDANCE. The biggest concordance of all is called STRONG'S

EXHAUSTIVE CONCORDANCE. It claims to list every word in the Bible, including all the 'if's', 'and's' and 'but's'. 'Exhaustive', by the way, does not mean 'exhausting'. It means 'full, thorough and complete'!

3. Another book you will find useful is a BIBLE DICTIONARY or ENCYCLOPAEDIA. It contains information on all kinds of Bible subjects. These, along with the maps, charts, and diagrams, will help you in your Bible study.

Now that you have these three tools, you will be able to sit down with a NOTE-BOOK AND A PEN, turn to the section you want to study in depth, then ask yourself questions to help you to understand what the passage is saying. “Who wrote these words?” “To whom was he writing/speaking?” “Why did he use these particular words?” “What do they mean?” “What should I learn from this passage?” “What should I do, or avoid doing?”

If you have a computer, you can buy a Bible Study CD. In fact, so much is available to help believers to study the Bible, that we have no real excuse not to be students of God's Word. The Bereans in the New Testament were commended for the fact that they “*searched the Scriptures daily*”. (Acts 17:11) We should also pray that God will help us understand His Word. (Psalm 119:18) We, too, should study the Bible so that we know what it teaches. Then we will be sure of two things. First of all, we will not be “*carried about with every wind of doctrine*”. (Ephesians 4:14) That means if we know what the Bible teaches we will not be confused by other people. Secondly, we will be able to help other people to understand what the Bible teaches. After all, you cannot teach other people what you do not understand yourself! If you want to be a preacher or a teacher, you must first of all be a student. Are you studying the Bible seriously? You should be!

Read through this sheet again if you do not know how to answer any of the questions on the worksheet.

Worksheet

1 WHY DO YOU THINK IT IS IMPORTANT TO STUDY THE BIBLE, NOT JUST TO READ IT?

2 A. WHAT IS A COMMENTARY?

B. WHAT IS A CONCORDANCE?

3 WHY DO YOU THINK THE STUDY SUGGESTS THAT YOU USE A NOTE-BOOK AND A PEN WHEN YOU STUDY THE BIBLE?

4 a. WHY DO YOU THINK THE PEOPLE OF BEREA WERE SAID TO BE NOBLE THAN THOSE IN THESSALONICA?

B. IN WHAT WAY ARE THE CHRISTIANS AT BEREA A GOOD EXAMPLE FOR US TODAY?

5 READ 2 TIMOTHY 2:15-17 AGAIN.

i. Write out VERSE 15.

ii In what way had the two men named in :17 strayed concerning the truth?

6 THE MANY FALSE TEACHINGS WHICH ARE AROUND US TODAY ARE LIKE THE "WIND" WHICH COULD BLOW US 'OFF COURSE', (SEE EPHESIANS 4:14 & 15). WHAT SHOULD WE DO TO MAKE SURE WE STAY 'ON COURSE' FOR GOD?

7 READ 1 TIMOTHY 4:15 -16, 2 TIMOTHY 3:14-15 AND 2 TIMOTHY 4:2. HOW IS TIMOTHY TO USE THE WORD OF GOD AND WHAT BENEFITS WOULD RESULT FROM IT?

Living Word Bible Church

The Christian Life Study Guide

Study 12

Name: _____

Memory Verse: Luke 21:3

"Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all."

READ: Luke 21:1-4, 1 Corinthians 16:1-3.

How is the work of God to grow? The Holy Spirit makes it grow when He uses our preaching, teaching or other forms of witness for Him. But in turn this involves expense! Buildings have to be maintained, and materials purchased. Where does the money come from? It doesn't drop down from Heaven! It comes from Christians. God expects us to give what we can to support His work.

OLD TESTAMENT TITHING.

One of the things that God expected His people in the Old Testament to do was to give a tithe to God. A tithe means a tenth, and in Old Testament times the Israelites were required to give a tenth of all their crops and animals to the Lord. (**See Leviticus 27:30-32 and Deuteronomy 14:22**) The produce and money collected through tithes were passed on to the Temple priests and Levites who were dependent upon it for their livelihood. In addition to tithing, the Israelites gave 'free-will offerings'; these were voluntary, whereas tithing was compulsory.

NEW TESTAMENT GIVING.

There is no commandment given to us in the New Testament about giving ten percent of what we have to the Lord. The early Christians were so keen to help each other that they shared what they had and handed it out "**as every man had need**" (**Acts 2:44-45**) Much later on, Paul was concerned that some believers were very poor and had no one to help them. So he wrote to Christians in **1 Corinthians 16:1-2**, saying, "**Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him**".

Here we see four principles of Christian giving:-

1. IT IS TO BE REGULAR.

Most churches had, and still have, a weekly collection, into which believers put a contribution. The offering was made "**on the first day of the week**".

2. IT IS TO BE INDIVIDUAL.

"**Let every one of you**". Both rich and poor, were involved.

3. IT IS TO BE PROPORTIONATE.

The principle seems to be, not a straight ten percent, but "**as God has prospered him**". So if a man had more money one week, than the previous week he was to give more.

4. IT IS TO BE PURPOSEFUL.

Giving is to be thoughtful and cheerful, always bearing in mind how much the Lord has given to us (**2 Corinthians 9:7**).

The money was distributed to Christians who were in financial need, as **2 Corinthians 8:1-4** shows us. On occasions, Paul received gifts from churches to whom he had brought the Gospel in the first place. As an example of this, we read in **Philippians 4:15-19** of how he thanks the church at Philippi for their generosity towards him. We can be quite sure that other apostles and missionaries were helped in the same way. Nowadays, churches use the money from the offerings to pay for all kinds of expenses, such as paying for electricity and water services, buying hymn-books, Sunday School materials or printing of Christian literature. Even today, local churches support financially those involved in the Lord's work, both at home and abroad. Putting something in the collection should be done carefully and privately so that no one sees what we give. The important thing, Jesus said, is to give so that only God knows how much we give. (**Matthew 6:1-4**) The Lord Jesus said that the widow in **Luke 21**, who had given only two mites, had contributed more than all the rich people, because she had given everything she had. However little we are able to give it will be recognised and rewarded by the Lord, if we have done it for His sake! His promise is, "**For them that honour me I will honour,**" (**1 Samuel 2:30**)

Read through this sheet again if you do not know how to answer any of the questions on the worksheet.

Worksheet

1 A. WRITE A SENTENCE TO EXPLAIN WHAT 'TITHING' MEANT FOR THE ISRAELITES.

B. TO WHAT USES WERE THE MONEY AND GOODS COLLECTED IN THIS WAY PUT?

2 THE FIRST CHRISTIANS, IN JERUSALEM, WERE VERY GENEROUS AND CARING IN THEIR ATTITUDES TOWARDS EACH OTHER. READ ACTS 4:32, 34-35, AND SAY IN YOUR OWN WORDS, WHAT THEY DID TO HELP THEIR POOR BROTHERS AND SISTERS.

3 1 CORINTHIANS 16:1-3 CONTAINS PAUL'S INSTRUCTIONS TO THE CHURCH ABOUT "the collection for the saints" (I.E. THE CHRISTIANS).

i. Write out the phrase which tells us that the collection was to be REGULAR.

ii. Which words suggest that the amount which a person gives may vary, from week to week?

iii. Write out the words which instruct us that ALL the members of the church were to contribute.

4 READ THE INSTRUCTIONS WHICH THE LORD JESUS GAVE HIS DISCIPLES ABOUT 'GIVING' OR 'DOING ALMS', IN MATTHEW 6:1-4.

i. He taught them not to "sound a trumpet". What do you think this means?

ii. What does the saying, "Let not your left hand know what your right hand is doing" mean?

iii. What will the Father do if we give secretly?

5 EXPLAIN WHAT THE LORD JESUS MEANT BY SAYING, "THIS POOR WIDOW HAS PUT IN MORE THAN ALL".

6 A. EXPLAIN WHY 'GIVING TO THE LORD' IS IMPORTANT IN THE CHRISTIAN'S LIFE.

B. TO WHAT USES COULD THE WEEKLY COLLECTION BE PUT?

7 READ 1 SAMUEL 2:30 AND EXPLAIN WHAT GOD WILL DO FOR THOSE WHO HONOUR HIM.

Living Word Bible Church

The Christian Life Study Guide

Study 13

Name: _____

Memory Verse: James 4:7

“Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”

READ: Ephesians 6: 10-18

When we first become Christians we have a new joy, a new love for the Lord and for other Christians. Sadly, we may, sometimes, lose this joy when problems come. What should we do then? Should we give up? We can expect problems as Christians because we are not yet perfect. When we become Christians we gain new enemies! Non-Christian friends may laugh at us, the devil will oppose us, and our own sinful nature will still be attracted to sin! In this series of Studies, we shall examine some of these problems.

TEMPTATIONS

Temptation is a real problem to everyone, but particularly to a Christian. This is because, now that we are believers, we have a ‘tug of war’ in our lives. This tension arises from the fact that we have a new nature now, which wants to please God by turning away from sin. But the old, sinful nature, which we had before we became Christians, is still with us and is attracted to the same sinful things which we did before we were saved. Therefore we can still be easily tempted to be sexually immoral, to steal, to lie, to cheat, to lose our tempers, and to be unkind and selfish. **(See Ephesians 4:22-24 and Colossians 3:9-10).**

Being tempted is not in itself a sin. Sin occurs when we give in to the temptation - we like it, think about it, and yield to it! **(James 1:13- 15).** As believers, there are certain things which we can do to help us resist temptation.

1. WE SHOULD MEMORISE VERSES FROM THE BIBLE

This will remind us of what God expects. **(Psalm 119:11).** Jesus Himself was tempted by Satan, but refused to give in to him. He won victory in the temptations which He suffered by quoting the

Word of God to the devil. The devil does not like the Scriptures at all! **(Luke 4:1-13).**

2. WE SHOULD RESOLVE, BEFORE GOD, NOT TO GO TO PLACES, OR DO THINGS THAT WE KNOW WILL LEAD US INTO SIN.

Job said that he had made a covenant (an agreement) with his eyes that he would not look lustfully at a girl. **(Job 31:1).** A resolve of this kind, made solemnly in the presence of God, strengthens us in the fight against temptation.

3 WE SHOULD KNOW OUR OWN WEAKNESSES.

We should ask God to give us victory over them. Knowing yourself is very important in the Christian life. We are all different and are tempted in varying ways. But we are all expected to resist temptation. This calls for constant watchfulness, as Peter reminds us in **1 Peter 5:8-9.**

4. WE SHOULD DEPEND UPON THE STRENGTH OF THE LORD JESUS.

In Him we have the power to resist all temptations. We should, **“Be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might”** and **“put on the whole armour of God”** that we may be able to stand against the crafty schemes of the devil. **(Ephesians 6:10-11).**

TRIALS

They are different from temptations. A temptation is something which may lead us to sin. Trials are problems and difficulties that come our way. Trials can be sicknesses, family problems, accidents, persecutions and similar things. God allows them to come in order to strengthen our faith and teach us important lessons which will help us to mature as Christians. **(See 1 Peter 1:6-7).**

Trials come to all mankind, not just to believers. They do not happen because we are sinners or because God does not love us. As believers we should be able to cope with them in a spiritual way. We have strengths which unbelievers do not have. We have the Lord, who has promised to be with us and never leave us. **(Hebrews 13:5-6).** We have Christian fellowship, and the faith to believe that any trials, which come to us, deepen our love for God.

Worksheet

1 THE STUDY STATES THAT WHEN WE BECOME CHRISTIANS WE GAIN NEW ENEMIES.. WHO ARE THESE ENEMIES ? _____

2 WHY IS THERE A "TUG OF WAR" IN THE LIFE OF A BELIEVER? _____

3 READ LUKE 4: 1-13 AND THEN ANSWER THE FOLLOWING:-

a. For how many days did Jesus' temptation last? _____

b. Give an account IN YOUR OWN WORDS of one of the temptations. _____

c. In each case, how did the Lord Jesus respond to Satan's attack? _____

4 ANSWER TRUE OR FALSE:-

i. Our warfare is against "**flesh and blood**". . _____

ii. The shield of our own strength will overcome the devil's darts. _____

iii. The sword of the Spirit is God's Word. _____

iv. Prayer is an important element in defeating temptations. _____

v. The Christian soldier's '**helmet**' is his own power. _____

5 ACCORDING TO 1 CORINTHIANS 10:13, WHAT ENCOURAGEMENTS DOES A CHRISTIAN HAVE IN THE TEMPTATIONS AND TRIALS THAT COME UPON HIM? _____

6 SUMMARISE IN YOUR OWN WORDS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TEMPTATIONS AND TRIALS. _____

7 READ 1 PETER 1:6-7 AND EXPLAIN, AS CLEARLY AS POSSIBLE, WHAT SHOULD BE THE OUTCOME OF THE TRIALS THAT GOD ALLOWS TO COME INTO OUR LIVES.

Living Word Bible Church

The Christian Life Study Guide

Study 14

Name: _____

Memory Verse: Romans 12:2

“Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”

Read 1 John 1:5-10, 1 John 2:15-17

Another problem we are likely to encounter as believers is the pressure we are put under by the world. When we say ‘the world’, we mean the present global system in its opposition to God and its rejection of the Lord Jesus. As believers we are **“in the world”** (John 17: 11), because we live in the same world as unbelievers. We should, however, not be like them in our life-style. Peer-pressure is one of the points of conflict between believers and nonbelievers. As a young Christian, you will face many questions, such as; “Should I go to discos?” and “Should I listen to, and sing, the pop songs of our culture?” “Should we behave immorally because those around us will laugh at us if we do not?” “How can we resist the pressures of a sinful society?”

The Bible gives us some good guidelines:-

1. REMEMBER TO WHOM YOU BELONG.

We are accountable to God because He is our Creator. **“Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth”** (Ecclesiastes 12: 1). But we also belong to Him, because He has bought us by the death of His Son, (see 1 Corinthians 6:20). Because of these facts we should stand in awe of Him, and give Him first place in our lives. This is what the Bible means when it speaks about **“the fear of the Lord”**. It teaches us that, **“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom”** (Proverbs 9:10). If you want to be wise in a sinful society, make it your aim to please Him rather than others, or yourself!

2. REMEMBER THAT WHEN WE SIN, WE SIN AGAINST GOD.

In the first place, all sin is against God. Joseph refused to commit adultery with Potiphar’s wife because he believed it was wrong and a sin against God. He said, **“How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?”** (Genesis 39:9). David,

having committed adultery and murder, (see 2 Samuel 11) said to God, **“Against thee, thee only, have I sinned”** (Psalm 51:4). The prodigal son, who left home and wasted his father’s money on a sinful way of life, eventually decided to return to his father. The words which he had planned to say when he met his father were, **“Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee”** (Luke 15:18). In other words, he recognized that his sin was firstly, and most importantly a sin against God! We know that when we sin, others are often hurt. This should make us think twice before we sin. So in the first place, all sin is against God!

3. REMEMBER THAT SIN BREAKS OUR FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD.

It must be admitted that Christians are not perfect - they do sin, (See 1 John 1:8). Our sins prevent us from having close fellowship with God. The psalmist expressed this in these words, **“If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me”** (Psalm 66: 18). Our peace is disrupted, our prayer life is hindered, and our relationship with God is spoiled!

4. REMEMBER THAT THE PLEASURES OF SIN ARE NOT LASTING.

When the pleasures of sin are over, we often have to face unpleasant consequences. Like Moses, we should choose God’s pathway for our lives, rather than **“to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season”** (Hebrews 11:25). Lasting joy and happiness can only come from serving and loving God, rather than satisfying self. The message of the Bible is clear, - **“If sinners entice you, consent thou not”** (Proverbs 1:10). Stand firm as a believer, and do not compromise.

Romans 12:2 says **“Be not conformed to this world”**, which means we are not to let this sinful world squeeze us into its mould. The godless world will not be a friend to you if you love God. You will have to choose between loving this evil world and loving God. Read 1 John 2: 15-17.

This Study challenges us to be true to our Lord Jesus and not to compromise with sin. We need to pray each day for God’s strength to stand for Him against the evil tide of wickedness and worldliness which is all around us!

Read through this sheet again if you do not know how to answer any of the questions on the worksheet.

Worksheet

- 1 EXPLAIN WHAT THE TERM 'WORLD' MEANS IN SUCH VERSES AS 1 JOHN 2:15.

- 2 THERE ARE TWO SENSES IN WHICH A CHRISTIAN BELONGS TO GOD. WHAT ARE THEY?

1.

2.

- 3 A. THINK ABOUT THE THREE BIBLE CHARACTERS MENTIONED IN SECTION 2 IN THE STUDY. WHAT VIEW DID THEY ALL TAKE ABOUT SIN?

WRITE OUT WHAT ANY ONE OF THEM SAID ABOUT THIS MATTER.

- 4 WHAT PROMISE DOES 1 JOHN 1: 9 GIVE US WHEN WE HAVE SINNED?

- 5 EXPLAIN WHAT YOU THINK THE PHRASE "THE PLEASURES OF SIN FOR A SEASON" (HEBREWS 11:25) MEANS.

- 6 OUTLINE, IN CONTRAST, THE CHIEF JOYS OF BEING A CHRISTIAN.

- 7 IN LIVING OUR LIVES WE OFTEN HAVE TO CHOOSE BETWEEN TWO ALTERNATIVES.

A. WHAT TWO ALTERNATIVES CAN YOU SEE IN THE MEMORY VERSE?

1.

2.

B. WHAT DO YOU THINK THIS VERSE MEANS FOR YOU TODAY?

Living Word Bible Church

The Christian Life Study Guide

Study 15

Name: _____

Memory Verse: 1 Peter 5:7

"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you."

Read Luke 11:1-4 & 9-13 and 1 Corinthians 13:1-7

In your new life as a Christian, it is possible to be discouraged or even tripped up! One area in which many Christians lose heart is in the matter of unanswered prayer. At the beginning, we are often full of zeal and excitement, praying for many things, and expecting God to answer all our prayers. After a while, however, we notice that some of our prayers are not answered in the way we would like. For instance, we might pray for someone to be saved and it doesn't happen! Sometimes we pray for healing for someone and it doesn't take place! What's wrong? Doesn't God love us anymore? Has He not heard us? Have we gone wrong somewhere? We need to be aware of these important principles when we pray:-

1. WE MUST UNDERSTAND THAT GOD'S ANSWER MAY NOT BE WHAT WE EXPECTED.

There are three answers to prayer - "Yes", "No" or "Not just yet". Both "No", and "Not just yet" are answers! When God does not give us what we ask for, it does not mean He has not heard our prayers. In this sense, there is no such thing as 'unanswered prayer'. For an example of a 'Not yet' answer, think about Zacharias and Elizabeth in Luke chapter 1. For an example of a 'No' answer, see Paul's words in 2 Corinthians 12:7-9.

2. WE PRAY 'IN THE NAME OF JESUS'.

The Lord Jesus taught His disciples, "**And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son**" (John 14:13). We must not think, however, that merely ending our prayers with the phrase, "In the name of the Lord Jesus" means we are using a spiritual 'abracadabra' which will always get us what we want. Praying 'in His name' actually means that we acknowledge His sole authority. Unworthy, selfish motives, therefore, have no place in our prayers! "**Ye ask and do not receive, because . . .**" (James 4:3).

3. WE HAVE NO RIGHT TO IMPOSE OUR WILL UPON GOD.

He is greater than we are, not the other way round.

Because God is sovereign, He has the right to act in accordance with His own will. That is why we should always pray, "**nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt**" (Matthew 26:39). If the Lord Jesus prayed that, how much more should we! We acknowledge that what we ask for should be given in line with His will. See 1 John 5:14.

4. WE DON'T ALWAYS KNOW WHAT IS BEST FOR US.

God, our Father, does! Any toddler wanting to play with a sharp bread knife will find it taken away from him quickly by his parents. Perhaps the child thinks the parents are mean and unkind. But in denying their child what is bad for him, they are being kind. We can count upon our heavenly Father giving us what He knows is best for us. Matthew 7:7-11.

Another area in which discouragement may arise is in our relationships with other people. We may discover tensions in family life, or relationship difficulties in college or work. Even in church life, people may not have the attitudes to us that we expected. What help can we get from the Bible when we are discouraged and upset by such problems?

5. WE MUST RECOGNISE OUR OWN SHORT-COMINGS.

Difficult relationships can often be improved if we are humble and admit that we are not perfect! Paul teaches us that we should not think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think. Romans 12:3.

6. WE MUST CONSIDER OTHERS.

The principle of Philippians 2:4 is that we should not be inward-looking and selfish, but that we should put the best interests of others first. To pray for those with whom we are having difficulties is always a big step towards restoring harmony. Note the words of the Lord Jesus in Matthew 5:44.

7. WE MUST ALWAYS ACT IN LOVE.

"**Charity suffereth long, and is kind**" (1 Corinthians 13:4). Just as the moving parts of an engine need to be lubricated with oil, so all human relationships work more smoothly when 'lubricated' by the love of God. The Christian life is not always an easy one. God never promised it would be! He has, however, assured us of His unfailing presence and He wants us to cast all our cares upon Him, for He cares for us, as the memory verse tells us.

Read through this sheet again if you do not know how to answer any of the questions on the worksheet.

Worksheet

1 A. WHAT THREE POSSIBLE ANSWERS TO OUR PRAYERS ARE MENTIONED IN THIS STUDY?

B. READ LUKE 1:5-13, AND EXPLAIN IN WHAT WAY ZACHARIAS AND ELIZABETH'S EXPERIENCE IS AN EXAMPLE OF A "NOT YET" ANSWER.

2 IN 2 CORINTHIANS 12:7-9, WHEN PAUL "PLEADED WITH THE LORD THREE TIMES" THAT THE "THORN IN THE FLESH" MIGHT DEPART FROM HIM, GOD'S ANSWER WAS, "NO". THE LORD DID, HOWEVER, GIVE HIM A GREAT PROMISE; WRITE OUT THE TEXT:-

3 A. WHAT DO YOU THINK IT MEANS TO "ASK IN MY NAME"? JOHN 14:13; 15:16; 16:23.

B. READ JAMES 4: 3 AND EXPLAIN WHY THESE PEOPLE'S PRAYERS WERE NOT BEING ANSWERED IN THE WAY THEY EXPECTED.

4 A. EXPLAIN WHAT PART YOU THINK THE BIBLE PLAYS IN HELPING CHRISTIANS TO UNDERSTAND GOD'S WILL FOR THEIR LIVES.

B. IF WE MAKE THE TEACHINGS OF THE BIBLE OUR GUIDE IN OUR PRAYER-LIFE, WHAT CONFIDENCE CAN WE HAVE, ACCORDING TO 1 JOHN 5:14?

5 WHAT HELPFUL ADVICE FROM THE BIBLE WOULD YOU GIVE TO ANOTHER CHRISTIAN WHO IS FINDING IT HARD TO 'GET ON WITH' SOME OTHER CHRISTIAN, IN HIS FAMILY, SCHOOL OR CHURCH?

6 A. READ PHILIPPIANS 2:4 AND EXPRESS, IN YOUR OWN WORDS, WHAT IT MEANS.

B.THE PERFECT EXAMPLE OF THIS PRINCIPLE IS THE LORD JESUS. WHAT DID HIS CONCERN FOR OTHERS CAUSE HIM TO DO? (SEE :5-8).

Living Word Bible Church

The Christian Life Study Guide

Study 16

Name: _____

Memory Verse: 1 Peter 5:8

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour."

Read Ephesians 6:10-20

Who is the devil? Is he real or just a figment of the imagination? Is he relevant to us today, or just a hang-over from the Middle Ages? The teaching of the Bible is that the devil, or Satan, is indeed a very real spiritual being! Unlike God, he is not all-powerful, yet his power is so great that the Scriptures call him "**the prince of this world**" (John 12:31) and "**the god of this world**" (2 Corinthians 4:4)

The devil is one of a Christians' worst enemies! He is determined to stop us from being effective Christians and to cause us trouble. He is absolutely evil and his aim is to destroy God's work and His people. In his wicked intentions he is served by multitudes of demons or evil spirits. To help us overcome this ruthless foe, here are some things of which we should be aware:-

SATAN IS NOT THE MOST POWERFUL BEING IN THE WORLD.

God is! God's power exceeds Satan's! God allows Satan only a certain amount of power. As a Christian, you have the Holy Spirit of God dwelling in you, and therefore you need not fear Satan. "**Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world**" (1 John 4:4).

SATAN IS A DEFEATED FOE.

As we struggle to overcome Satan's power in our lives it is very helpful to remember that he is, right now, a defeated foe! His defeat came about because "**the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil**" (1 John 3:8). The Lord Jesus in His death on the cross gained the victory over Satan and secured our release from his power (see Hebrews 2:14-15). The evidence for his defeat lies in the truth that the Lord Jesus has been raised from the dead!

When you became a Christian, God sealed you with

His Holy Spirit and has given you the spiritual power to overcome Satan if you want to. The tragedy of many believers is that they sin because they want to, not because they have to. God always gives a way of escape if we look for it. "**Resist the devil, and he will flee from you**" (James 4:7).

SATAN NEVER WANTS THE BEST FOR ANYONE.

He is out to spoil your new life for God. We should always remember that he is a master deceiver (2 Corinthians 11:14) and the "**father of lies**" (John 8:44). We should constantly be on our guard against his subtle tactics! He has no intention of giving you anything good!

SATAN IS A SPIRITUAL ENEMY.

He must be fought with spiritual weapons. These weapons are, faith in God, prayer, the Word of God, used like a sword against the devil, and all the other items of spiritual armour listed for us in Ephesians 6:10-18. You cannot fight against Satan without God's help. But God wants us to gain victories and He will help us, if we rely on Him. Satan's power is very real and should never be played with. Christians should never have anything to do with Ouija boards, séances, horoscopes, signs of the zodiac (astrology) or anything that is questionable in its origin. We must keep away from all these things, for they are the means by which Satan has entrapped many people. "**Abstain from all appearance of evil**" (1 Thessalonians 5: 22).

There are three main enemies of God's people and we have considered them all - the world, the flesh and the devil. Do not be discouraged. God is with you, and He will help you.

Read through this sheet again if you do not know how to answer any of the questions on the worksheet.

This study begins the course to an end, but it does not mean that you do not have to keep on reading, studying and meditating on the Word of God (the Bible). Instead, it is our prayer that this course of studies will motivate you to dig into the Scriptures even deeper.

Worksheet

1 WHAT NAMES, OR DESCRIPTIONS, ARE USED FOR THE DEVIL, IN THESE REFERENCES?

a) **MATTHEW 4:3**

b) **MATTHEW 4:10**

c) **JOHN 8:44**

d) **REVELATION 20:2**

2 TRUE OR FALSE:-

a) The devil is equal with God, in power.

b) The devil is "the god of this world".

c) A Christian has the Holy Spirit within him.

d) The devil never tempted the Lord Jesus.

e) The Lord Jesus never yielded to temptation.

3 READ HEBREWS 2:14-15. THESE VERSES TELL US TWO THINGS WHICH THE LORD JESUS ACHIEVED BY HIS DEATH. WHAT ARE THEY?

1.

2.

4 READ JAMES 4: 7, THEN ANSWER:-

a) Suggest some ways in which we can "resist the devil".

b) If we resist the devil, what does God promise?

5 IN THE FIGHT AGAINST TEMPTATION AND SIN, A CHRISTIAN HAS "THE WHOLE ARMOUR OF GOD" AVAILABLE TO HIM. READ EPHESIANS 6:10-17 AND THEN SAY BRIEFLY WHAT SPIRITUAL MEANING IS GIVEN TO:-

a) the shield

b) the sword

6 A. WHEN JESUS WAS TEMPTED BY THE DEVIL, HE ANSWERED EACH OF THE DEVIL'S SUGGESTIONS BY QUOTING FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT. READ MATTHEW 4:4, 7&10, AND WRITE THE THREE WORDS WHICH JESUS REPEATED IN EACH OF HIS ANSWERS.

B. IN WHAT WAYS CAN THE BIBLE HELP US, IN OUR BATTLES WITH SATAN?

7 READ ABOUT THE DEVIL'S FINAL DOWNFALL IN REVELATION 20:1-3 AND 7-10, THEN WRITE SHORT ANSWERS TO THESE QUESTIONS:-

a) For how long will the devil be bound?

b) What name is given to his prison?

c) On being released, what will he do?

d) How will the devil's battle-forces be destroyed?

e) What will then become of the devil?